

**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**



**CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REVIEW**

Self-Study Guide

Revised November 2006

Overview and Brief History

The standards and procedures which govern career and technical instruction at the secondary level in the state of Maine are set forth in Maine Department of Education Rule Chapter 232, "Standard Criteria for Maine Secondary Vocational Programs." Chapter 232 calls for site-based program reviews every five years.

In 2001, MDOE's Career and Technical Education (CTE) team researched the current standards present in NEASC's technical education review materials and assimilated appropriate items along with concepts and requirements in Maine Department of Education Rule Chapters 125 and 127 dealing with curriculum, instruction, and assessment. CTE also incorporated its best thinking with respect to changes in Rule Chapter 232 defining quality programs.

In 2002, the department contracted with the Center for Career Development (CCD) to finalize the document and to facilitate the site-based review and self-study processes. To date, four school reviews have been completed, and a schedule for all remaining school reviews has been drafted. The Commissioner has confirmed that all Maine CTE institutions will undergo a Comprehensive School Review, including Self-Study and visitation, approximately every ten years. An abbreviated five-year review will evaluate and follow up on progress made on action items resulting from the previous ten-year review. CTEs will also have the option of substituting the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation process for the DOE review, provided that a MDOE representative is part of the visitation team.

The Comprehensive School Review process is designed to serve two interrelated but distinct functions: public accountability and institutional improvement.

1. School review provides a measure of accountability by demonstrating for its key stakeholders—including legislators, state and federal agencies, sending schools, community members, students, and parents—that the institution has clearly defined and appropriate educational objectives, appears to be accomplishing them substantially, and is so organized, staffed, and supported that it can be expected to continue to do so.
2. School review promotes institutional improvement by leading the staff through a critical and extensive self-examination of the school's goals, operations, and results and by providing an informed analysis and judgment by peers external to the institution. The ultimate goal is the continuous enhancement of the quality of education for each student served.

Audit Process and Typical Timeline

The following timeline presents a *typical* schedule for illustration purposes. Any participating center/region may choose to negotiate an alternate timeline.

1. **Orientation** – Introduction and orientation to the self-study and visitation process for the participating center/region administration and designated others, (e.g., advisory board members, student services coordinator, and faculty department leaders).
Staff Introduction and Orientation – MDOE representatives meet with center faculty and staff to review the goals and procedural details of the self-study and visitation.

Timeframe: 1 year prior to scheduled review

2. **Technical Assistance** – MDOE and CCD representatives assist center/region project coordination team, lending technical assistance as necessary in the development of the self-study document. (See: “*State of Maine Department of Education Draft Vocational School Pilot Study – Self-Study Document Standards*,” Sept. 2005.)
Timeframe: 1 year prior to scheduled review
3. **Draft Self Study Review** – MDOE/CCD staff review and comment on draft self study document.
Timeframe: 6 weeks prior to scheduled review
4. **Pre-visit** – MDOE/CCD staff and visitation team leader(s) visit center/region to address visit details such as needs of the visitation committee in work area and supporting documentation.
Timeframe: 8 weeks prior to review
5. **Team Visit** – The center/region will host the visitation team, which will review documents, meet with staff, and inspect the facilities. The visitation team will provide an exit interview for the director and other designated staff. At this time, any health and safety issues identified will be conveyed to allow for immediate action.
Timeframe: Date established during the Orientation visit
6. **Draft Report** – The visitation team leader will provide a draft report for the director’s review and comment. The director’s comments should be limited to factual information and not the findings of the report.
Timeframe: 8 weeks after the completion of School Review
7. **Final Report** – The final report will be based on the Self Study document and the visitation team’s findings. The report will offer both commendations and recommendations and, if necessary, specific directives to address any significant health and safety issues.
Timeframe: 3 months after completion of the School Review
8. **DOE-CTE Action** – The DOE will offer specific responses and, where appropriate, specific strategies relative to the center/region’s action plan. The DOE will grant one of the following: full school approval, conditional approval, or disapproval with accompanying requirements to meet full approval.
Timeframe: Within 6 months of the visit
9. **Center/Region Action Plan** – The participating center/region will present an action plan to the DOE for review and comment.
Timeframe: By December 15 with the Local Action Plan
10. **Two year follow-up** – Center/region will provide a two-year follow-up detailing its progress in meeting the objectives of the action plan and in enhancing the educational offerings of the school. DOE will review the report and offer observations and comments as necessary. At this time, DOE will, in consultation with the center/region, determine if a full five-year or abbreviated follow-up visit will occur.

Self-Study Standards

The following 11 standards will provide a framework for the self-study process:

1. Assessment

The school frequently and carefully measures, with a variety of methods, student progress toward all goals, including affirmative action and school climate. This information is disaggregated and used to evaluate programs, direct instruction, and related resources. The school's assessment practices are aligned with the Comprehensive Local Assessment Systems of its sending schools.

2. Clear and Focused Goals

The school has a clearly written statement reflective of the needs, beliefs and values of the school community. It is supported by stated goals and objectives and is consistent with the districts' philosophy. The statement shows evidence of long and short-range planning and assures the involvement of teachers, administrators and community in the process of development and evaluation.

3. Community/School Relations

The school shall have a written, collaboratively-planned program of community outreach which supports affirmative action and encourages parent/guardian and community involvement in the educational process toward the achievement of the school's goals and objectives. School goals, procedures, and student progress are regularly discussed with and communicated to parents/guardians and citizens in ways which are appropriate, including for individuals with English as a second language.

4. Curriculum

The school demonstrates evidence of a well planned and periodically evaluated curriculum which has consistently resulted in exemplary educational programming. The curriculum, based on the philosophy and goals of the district, show a direct relationship between and among subject areas while preserving the specific objectives of each discipline.

5. Facilities

The school plant, site, and equipment are sufficient to support the programs of the school and meet accessibility standards for individuals with disabilities. They are maintained to ensure the safety and health of all occupants and offer an effective setting for the delivery of high quality programs and services to all students.

6. High Expectations

Teachers and administrators have high educational and behavioral expectations for all students. Students demonstrate measurable improvement in academic achievement, life skills development, self discipline, interpersonal growth, and attitudes toward work. The staff demonstrates its belief that all students can learn essential skills and beyond.

7. Instruction

The school demonstrates a carefully coordinated effort to provide instructional processes which have consistently resulted in a learning environment that promotes excellence and supports affirmative action and school climate. A variety of instructional techniques are used by a majority of the teachers. Teachers strive to meet the instructional needs of all students. A school-wide agreement exists about the importance of the instructional program, and learning time is maximized by well planned activities. Instruction furthers knowledge of Technology Program Statewide Standards and the *Maine Learning Results*.

8. Leadership/Management

The school is effectively managed and provides leadership that promotes the achievement of educational excellence. Instructional leaders make decisions based primarily on instructional and curricula goals that support school climate. Instructional leaders set high expectations from goals, monitor student progress, and direct resources to meet these goals.

9. School Climate and Affirmative Action

The school has a climate which promotes individual self-esteem, high expectations for achievement, acceptance of the differences among people to include issues of race, sex, and disability, and a positive attitude toward learning. The climate enhances and encourages learning and promotes an atmosphere of non-discrimination. Staff consistently models these behaviors for all students.

10. Staff Development

The school has a carefully planned staff development program which supports issues of school climate and which is guided by sound educational theory that promotes exemplary practices. This written plan evolves from the school's affirmative action goals as well as instructional and curricula goals. Developmentally appropriate programs are available for new and experienced staff.

11. Student Services

The school shall provide staff, facilities and materials necessary to offer comprehensive student services for all students. Student records and permanent files shall be kept and monitored in a confidential and secure manner.

Note: The Self-Study Standards Document and other related resources are available for download on the Center for Career Development web site at <http://ccdme.org/SchoolReview/> or through the MDOE Career and Technical Education site at <http://www.state.me.us/education/it/index.shtml> .

Roles of steering committee and subcommittees

A key part of the Comprehensive School Review is the committee work done by the center/region during the 10-month self-study process. It is expected that a steering committee consisting of administrators and a cross-section of staff be organized early in the process to map out strategies and responsibilities for completing the self-study.

For each of the eleven (11) standards, it is suggested that a subcommittee be formed to gather information and answer the questions posed in each unit of the Self-Study Document Standards. The director will appoint subcommittee chairs and a sufficient number of members to accomplish each task. Depending on the scope and demands of each subcommittee, it may be expedient to appoint some school staff to more than one subcommittee. (Of course, smaller schools will have to organize subcommittees and assign overlapping responsibilities in a way that makes the best use of staff time and resources.)

Each subcommittee will meet on a regular basis, assign tasks to members as appropriate, and keep a written record of meeting minutes and agendas. It is also critical that each subcommittee develop a plan of action that includes interim progress reports to the steering committee and final deliverables.

Subcommittees will draw information from the self-study of each program area. Program areas will provide reports for review by the visiting committee. These reports will include a narrative and strengths and recommendations in the areas of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. Other standards may be addressed in program reports as appropriate.

If a subcommittee needs clarification on any of its assigned tasks, the respective chair should bring that question to the steering committee. If further explanation is needed, the subcommittee chair can contact Lora Downing at the Maine Department of Education.